Propositions

Accompanying the dissertation

Human impacts on the functioning of African savannas

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1. The replacement of ‘recoverable’ elements with ‘resistant’ ones is a major implication of human impacts in African savannas (This thesis)

2. The concepts of fast versus slow, wasteful versus frugal, and acquisitive versus conservative plant strategies are relevant in predicting the extent and rate of vegetation change in response to human activities (This thesis)

3. In environments in which there is a recurrence of natural hazards, populations may spend most of their time recovering from the hazards (Harper, 1967)

4. Due to the importance of disturbance in maintaining vegetation structure in tropical savannas, ‘alternative dynamic regimes’ are more helpful for understanding savanna ecosystem functioning than ‘alternative stable states’.

5. Nature is not fragile, what is fragile are the ecosystem services on which humans depend (Levin, 1999)

6. Protecting wildlife starts with protecting people

7. Recognition of nature as a rights holder will better protect natural ecosystems and its wildlife

8. As long as we consider GDP as the standard metric of a country’s ‘wealth’, we cannot protect the planet’s biodiversity in the long run

9. The wise ecologist is he or she who constantly wonders afresh (adapted from Andre Gide)

10. A done thesis is better than a perfect thesis